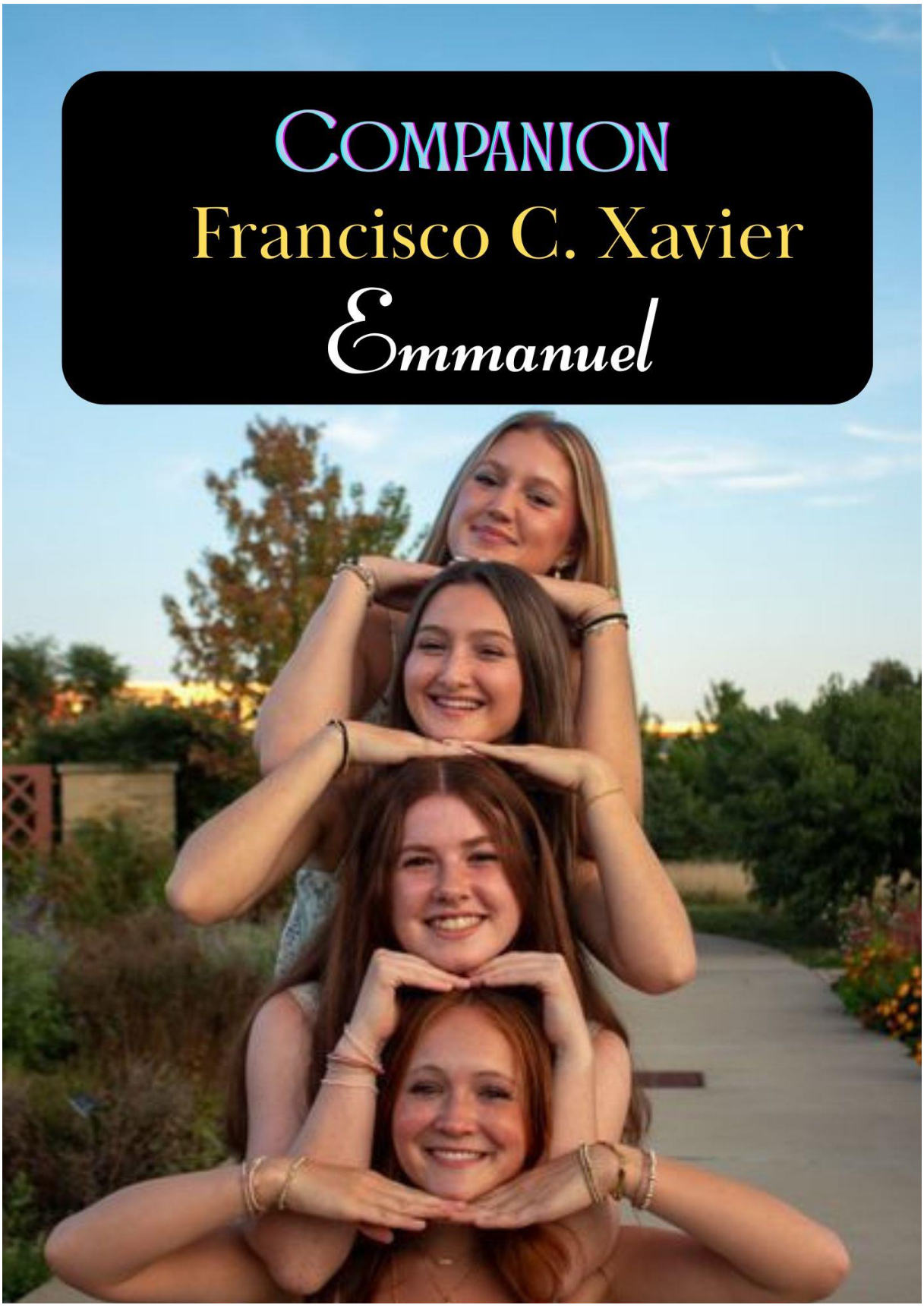
COMPANION

Francisco C. Xavier

Emmanuel



COMPANION

FRANCISCO C. XAVIER

EMMANUEL

COMPANION

"We would like to receive a book condensing the thoughts of peace and love that the Spiritist Doctrine offers us."

"We desire a brief channel of comfort."

"Why can we not have a book that grants us swift moments of reading and meditation, focused on our spiritual needs?"

"We would be deeply grateful and happy with a small volume that might serve us as a companion for reflection."

"We envision a book to be read in such a way as to assimilate the greatest number of Spiritist teachings in the least amount of time."

"Try to send us, from the Beyond, a little book, with short texts."

"We have but rare minutes available for reading—please bear that in mind."

"Provide us with a small-sized book, synthesizing ideas that may readily reach our understanding."

"We would appreciate a collection of brief pages encompassing Spiritist thought itself, as an element of information and uplifting culture."

"If possible, provide us with a small book for quick reading."

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These are ten among the many requests received from various friends, which inspired the preparation of this unpretentious volume, to which we have permitted ourselves to give the name ***Companion.***

May we, on our part, have attained the objective we proposed, satisfying the wishes of our brethren, notwithstanding our own unworthiness to serve them.

May the Lord grant us peace and light upon the paths we are called to tread—such are our prayers.

Emmanuel

Uberaba, 2 de março de 1977.

PAGE OF FAITH

Listen, my friend!...

Whoever you may be, wherever you may dwell, and with whomsoever you may be:

Whether:

-You have suffered grave mistakes or committed many errors;

-You are weary after bearing heavy tribulations;

-You endure this or that illness;

-You remain encircled by harsh afflictions;

-You live in abandonment by those you love most;

-You have experienced disillusionments or offenses you never expected;

-You walk through a tangle of tremendous difficulties;

-You long for affections you have never known;

-You sigh for ideals whose fulfillment seems distant;

-You lament losses you did not foresee;

-You labor under injuries and persecutions that poison your hours;

-You serve amid misunderstandings or the stones cast upon you;

Or whether you weep for the loss of beloved ones before the visitation of death...

Whatever the impediments or trials that mark your life, calm your spirit in living faith and remain steadfast in the task

entrusted to you; for whenever we keep patience and confidence within our obstacles, working and serving in the effort to fraternally resolve the problems of others, God—in urgent providence—will also resolve our own.

FRIENDLY NOTES

Do not be disheartened in the world before the trials you undergo.

You find yourself in the situation most suited to the achievements that concern your spiritual life.

You remain in the body that best favors your attainments in the inner field.

The social environment in which your activities unfold is the landscape wherein you possess the finest resources for experience.

You have with yourself the right companions who assist you in the improvement to which you aspire.

Difficulties that surprise you are the tests you should take to find success.

Friends who leave you along the way are affections that withdraw temporarily so that you may acquire steadiness.

Conflicts that arise on your path are valuable lessons for achieving peace within yourself.

Losses are calls to vigilance.

Disappointments are the price paid for the light of truth.

Misunderstandings teach discernment.

Solitude is a season of silent renewal in the mechanisms of the soul.

Accept yourself as you are and accept the life in which you must remain, in the condition in which you find yourself, so that you may accomplish the possible improvement.

Whatever the extent of the trials accounted among the obligations you have assumed, rise above the ground of any sadness and do the good you can.

Working and serving without complaint; for if you are in the use of reason, it is because God relies upon you to help yourself, by giving to life the utmost of all the best you already possess.

BUT GOD...

Many ignore you.
Yet God knows you.

Some see you as ill.
God, however, preserves your health.

Some companions disapprove of you.
But God blesses you.

Someone may arise to cast stones at you.
God, nonetheless, embraces you.

Some perceive you as falling into temptation.
God, however, knows how steadfastly you resist.

Someone appears who abandons you.
Yet God receives you.

Some harm you.
But God increases your resources.

Someone may cause you to weep.
God, however, consoles you.

Some wound you.
And yet God restores you.

Some consider you in error.
But God sees you otherwise.

Whatever the difficulty,
Do good and entrust yourself to God.

COMPANIONS AND THE PATH

Whenever you feel inclined to complain about certain psychological traits of those whom the Lord has entrusted to your family ministry, reflect upon the diversity of creations that compose Nature.

Each star stands out with its own expression.
Each plant reveals a particular purpose.

The rose and the violet are different, although both are flowers.
The roads of the world follow distinct lines among themselves.
We too, God's children, resemble one another in many ways,
yet we are not strictly the same.

According to the principles of cause and effect, which trace for us the law of reincarnation, each of us carries within the sum of all we have made of ourselves, with the obligation to subtract the evils we have gathered until their complete extinction, and to multiply the good we already possess to share it with others in the building of general happiness.

Do not seek to reshape your loved ones beneath the hammer of force. No one needs to extinguish a neighbor's light to illuminate their own home. One candle illuminates another without diminishing itself.

Love your family—those with whom God allows you to share existence—yet respect the path of fulfillment to which they have aligned themselves.

One has chosen the way of self-refinement; another has sought the road of constant labor; another one has embraced the trail of untransferable responsibilities to produce the best; and still another has appointed for himself, to rise, the thorny path of trials and tears.

Assist each one as you are able; however, do not attempt to transfigure their spirit all at once, recognizing that neither would we accept our own renewal upon the foundations of violence.

Love your dear ones as they are and during the trials to which they may be called for the purpose of advancement in the Higher Spiritual Life.

If you cannot discover the best way to help them, grow calm and pray for their strengthening and peace, in the certainty that God watches over us and that we are all children of God.

COURAGE AND FAITH

Life may have been bitter.

Thorns may stretch across your path.

You have probably fallen a few times, and many others have risen again, at the cost of tears.

You have suffered persecution and mockery.

The world may have appeared to your eyes as a vast desert.

You have witnessed the force of death that has taken from you the presence of loved ones.

You have seen the desertion of companions, renouncing your ideals.

Loved ones have ignored your purposes of elevation.

You have weathered crises in the form of apparent failures.

You have experienced the scorn of many of those to whom you confided.

You have heard the fiery words of those who condemned you without understanding you.

You have walked long stretches of solitude.

You have lost values that you considered essential to the sustenance of the endeavors that give value to your time.

You suffer tribulations.

You endure conflicts.

You go through difficulties and temptations.

However, no matter how great the burden of trials and problems that weigh on your shoulders, lift your head and walk forward, working and serving, loving and helping, because no one, nor any circumstance, can steal your immortality, nor separate you from the omnipresence of God.

DISCERNMENT AND LOVE

It is natural to examine, in the world, the problems of conduct— to discern right from wrong, to understand what helps and what harms.

And whenever you are able, it is just that you seek to uproot, with love, the evil that disfigures the pearls of goodness, with the care of the farmer who removes the invasive weed from the body of the tree.

Yet, in every process of correction, allow compassion to illumine your thoughts, so that the ideal of justice may not become a desert within your heart.

Remember the efforts you exert so that kindness and tolerance may not depart from your life, and be willing to understand and assist, in praise of the good.

You encounter brothers and sisters regarded as delinquents. Imagine the obsessive processes in which they were tormented for a long time, until they became enmeshed in the shadows of imbalance.

You have seen companions seized by rebelliousness. Reflect upon the vast stretches of hardship and suffering they crossed, until their strength was exhausted, impelling them toward discord.

You have witnessed the regrettable transformation of friends who withdrew from noble tasks entrusted to them. Pause to meditate on the conflicts they endured, until all their resistance gave way.

You know beloved souls who have plunged into bondage to the toxins that devastate their energies. Consider the temptations that filled their hours, until they inclined themselves toward dependence upon chemical agents falsely taken as relief, in whose abuse they become neglectful of themselves.

Number the sufferings of the desperate, the sorrowful, the hopelessly ill, the nearly suicidal, the brothers and sisters confined for treatment because of indefinable anguish; and you will understand that the infinite Goodness of God appoints judges to assign penalties destined for the redemption of our faults, just as He inspires the formation of physicians to heal our ailments, so that delinquency and disease may not destroy our lives.

But above all, He ceaselessly impels us toward fraternity, which guides our actions in the building of a better future under the sovereignty of love.

QUESTION OF CHANGE

You cannot change the world to the extent of your own desires, but you can change yourself.

No one is prevented from transforming this or that idea in their own head.

Just as the seed shapes the form and destiny of the tree, your own desires shape your life.

Learn to gain sympathy by knowing how to lose it.

It is always advisable to improve our manners before life's circumstances force us to improve them.

By always listening more and speaking a little less, you will acquire numerous resources that favor your own renewal.

Listen attentively to any opinions of others, even when they seem frankly absurd to you.

Dialogue should be a process of learning, but not of fighting.

In any meeting, it's wise not to forget that perhaps, in a few days, you might need that person who seems the most unpleasant to you.

Accepting our problems with good humor is the best way to convert them into factors of self-help.

Irritation is a way of freezing one's own interests.

Every encounter is an opportunity for you to practice the science of direction.

Each person is motivated by what they value doing.

You can adorn discouragement with the most beautiful words; however, discouragement will bring you no benefit.

Difficulties fall into everyone's path; the way we use them is what makes the difference.

Admire the stars, but don't neglect the traffic signs.

Others may have many opinions about you, but the life you have is the one God placed you in so that you may do your best.

Often, losing something of value, in changes imposed by suffering, is the way to find something more precious along the way.

In the accounting of life, age is convention; what exists is time, and all time is important.

THE INNER STAR

All forms of beneficence are clothed in singular greatness; nevertheless, that in which love expresses itself through you will always be the highest.

When you radiate such light, you will notice flashes of joy shining within you—treasures enclosed in an inner happiness you are not always able to convey to others.

Consider the gift of yourself, so often forgotten, through which you may illumine your own path according to the laws of life.

You have perceived the winding road upon which a certain friend has placed his own steps...

Bless him in silence and pray on his behalf, without worsening his problems through censure, remembering that God will watch over him in the difficult experiences to which he may temporarily attach himself.

That dear person did not respond to your expectations in this or that undertaking...

Refrain from affectionate demands, reflecting upon the difficulties that may have led to such omission, certain that Divine Providence has entrusted responsibilities to that soul which, for the present, you are not meant to share.

A certain companion has chosen a manner of life different from the one in which you find peace. Send supportive vibrations toward him, helping him to fulfill himself in goodness within the fields of refinement where he now stands, without increasing his obstacles, confident that God knows the best way to guide him.

Another soul within your personal circle has fallen into error... Do not delay that one's readjustment with the lash of

condemnation; instead, offer the help that is within your reach, convinced that God will know how to raise him or her again.

Let understanding shine within your soul as an inner star. Eternal Providence aids and blesses us without measure or scale.

The sorrow and suffering you claim are almost always connected to others. Yet let us not forget that others and we ourselves all belong to God.

AS THEY WERE

It is hard us to observe companions who return to Earth in difficult conditions.

Not infrequently, we hear the question: "Why so?"

A child emerging from the cradle with mental imbalance or manifesting grave illness might appear to reveal a strange cruelty in Nature. We know, however, that Divine Providence is founded upon justice and mercy. All those who enroll themselves in the school of consanguinity through reincarnation arise within the family group as they were in the Spiritual World.

It is never excessive to reaffirm that each of us individually brings the sum of all the achievements we have accomplished throughout the multiple existences with which we have been blessed in the course of time.

Creators of our own destiny, we bear within ourselves what we have made of ourselves.

When we depart from the Physical Plane toward the Spiritual Plane, if thoughts of guilt obscure or disturb our minds, we become bearers of inhibitions and imbalances, of sufferings and reparations that we ourselves prescribe, before a conscience burdened by debts in our spiritual formation.

Under such conditions, despite the affections and resources we once enjoyed in the Spiritual Life, we find ourselves sorrowful and infirm, until we obtain a new rebirth in which it becomes possible to rectify the faults committed to our own detriment or to the detriment of others.

Before the arms of trial, let us embrace the complex companions who knock at the doors of our soul, asking for support and understanding.

They are friends requesting shelter and proper treatment in the pharmacy of time, contracting with us blessed debts of love which, in the future, they will know how to redeem.

AN ASIDE IN DIALOGUE

When affliction is discussed, it is important to reflect upon the demands of peace within our own relationships.

Peace, however, is born in the mind of each one.

Such an affirmation implies another: we must offer our peace to those around us to receive it from them. It is a form of beneficence of the spirit from whose practice none of us can withdraw without loss.

To exercise it, however, it is indispensable to prune useless anxieties and restrain negative impulses through which, on Earth, we have become accustomed—without perceiving it—to dissipate the tranquility of others.

The attainment of the reciprocal support to which we refer requires of us not only understanding but also the exercise of constructive compassion toward one another, so that unnecessary tension may cease to be one of the most dangerous ingredients of illness and death in the world.

*

There are those who say that technological progress, in many instances, destroys human tranquility. Yet the machine operates according to the disposition of the operator.

What, then, shall we say of nervousness, intolerance, the passion for reckless speed, inattention, immaturity elevated to positions of direction, and the habit of excuse-making in behaviors that lead to imbalance in the enjoyment of progress?

No one needs to theorize excessively about this. The unfolding drama of a world in reconstruction is revealed before our own

eyes in the laboratory of daily life.

If we propose to suppress the sterile tension that, little by little, hurls us into so many domestic and social calamities, it is imperative that we turn ourselves to the cultivation of peace.

And knowing that Divine Providence supplies us with all the resources necessary for the building of good in the field of our lives, if we desire peace, we must commit ourselves to constructing it.

EMOTIONAL TENSION

Not infrequently, we encounter here and there brothers and sisters made ill by emotional maladjustments.

Almost always, they do not walk—they drag themselves along. They do not engage in dialogue—they cultivate complaint and lamentation.

It has been demonstrated that on Earth the emotional tension of the incarnate creature increases with time.

Insecurity, inner conflict, frustration, sadness, discouragement, anger, nonconformity, and apprehension—together with other negative states of the soul—subtly strike the physical body, opening the way to illnesses of obscure origin through constant repetition, gradually wearing down the organic cosmos.

If you can accept the existence of God and the wholesome practice of whatever religion brings you greater comfort, preserve yourself against such imbalances.

Begin by accepting life itself as it is, seeking to improve it with patience.

Learn to value others as they present themselves, without demanding immediate change from them.

Dedicate yourself to the work that sustains you, without neglecting periods of rest or wholesome recreation through which your energies may be restored.

Serve others as much as you can.

Dwell on the better side of situations and people, forgetting what may seem inconvenient or unpleasant.

Do not harbor resentment.

Cultivate simplicity, avoiding the burden of complications and unproductive matters that steal your peace.

Accept failure as a useful lesson when failure arises.

Temper conversion with the leaven of hope and joy.

As far as possible, do not make yourself a problem for anyone, striving instead to care for yourself responsibly.

When memories of the past contain no real value, let what has gone be forgotten, using the present to build a better future.

If the inevitable occurs, accept the trials before you with courage, certain that all creatures pass through hours of bitterness and tears.

Offer a smile of sympathy and kindness to whomever you meet.

As for the death of the body, do not dwell upon it, holding the conviction that no one has ever lived in the world without the need to face it.

And by working and serving always, expecting no reward other than the blessing of peace within your own conscience, no emotional tension will create discouragement or illness for you.

If you fulfill your duty with sincerity, when strength fails you, God will sustain you, and where you are unable to accomplish all the good you wish to do, God will always accomplish the most important part.

THEMES OF HOPE

Whoever inclines toward pessimism and complains of loneliness should observe whether anyone truly delights in resting upon thorns.

Reflect that if you had not been born to improve the environment in which you live, you would certainly be in Higher Realms.

Through lamentation it is possible to discourage those who most assist us.

If you intend to help someone, begin by showing joy.

A sorrowful conversation with the sorrowful leaves the sorrowful even more sorrowful.

Whoever says that God has grown weary of sustaining Humanity should meditate upon the beauty of the Sun at every dawn.

If you must weep for some reason, you deem just, weep while working for good, so that your tears may not be wasted.

On days of trial, displays of exuberant humor may not be fitting; nevertheless, good cheer and hope are lights and blessings everywhere.

Keep the lesson of the past, but do not waste time lamenting what time cannot restore.

When you stand on the brink of discouragement, ask yourself whether you are in a world under construction or in a holiday resort.

God permitted the existence of waterfalls so that we might learn how much strength for labor and renewal we can draw from our own falls.

Do not suffer over the faults of others; they are spirits like us, in preparation or treatment for the Greater Life.

If you seek peace, do not criticize—help always.

Name the person who has built anything worthwhile without sweat and suffering.

All irritation is an obstacle in work.

Leave a trace of joy wherever you pass, and your joy will be increased further ahead.

Whoever robs hope creates illness. A smile is always a light at your door.

PROGRESS AND LOVE

Impressive is the march of progress.
More sublime, however, is the love that gives it light.

Remarkable is the intelligence of those who create the metallic birds that cross the skies of the world.
Even nobler is the wisdom of those who employ them to foster fraternity among nations.

Admirable is the skill of those who design machines that overcome distance.
Far more valuable is the sense of responsibility and discernment of those who direct them in the service of honest labor.

Notable is the reasoning of those devoted to broadcasting, sustaining swift communication within community life.
Higher still is the kindness of those who use such resources to uplift education among humanity.

Impressive is the capability of those who organize the wonders of the press.
Greater is the dedication of all who write to guide and comfort their brothers and sisters.

Significant is the reliability of those who developed the tractor to ease the turning of the soil.
More meaningful is the devotion of those who plant with humility, bringing forth the daily miracle of bread upon the table.

Technique may be powerful.
Understanding surpasses it. Culture can instruct.
Charity transforms.

Wherever you may be, whoever you are—choose love.

Progress raises structures.
Love illuminates the way.

For this reason, let us learn to work and to serve unceasingly, so that we may reach a higher joy.

In truth, before God, however vast the tide of evolution that marks our existence, there is no authentic advancement without the blessing of love.

IN THE WORLD'S VIEW

Do not say the world is perverse, when it is precisely from the soil of the world that the blessing of bread is gathered.

The swamp is a complaint of the field against the neglect of the farmer.

Compare Earth to a university and you will see that every incarnate spirit is a student in formation.

What you plant in the hearts of others is what you will harvest in their responses.

Whoever places darkened lenses upon the eyes will see only sadness where the world displays the colors of hope and joy.

Existence for each of us is what we are making of it.

Each person sees in the world his or her own image.

The best criticism is that which shows how something should be done.

Usefulness is the real strength that secures each one's position.

The safest protection you may enjoy is that of your own service.

Do not ask beyond what is necessary, lest your duties arise delayed.

From time to time, to value time, list how many words you have spoken during the day without any significance for good.

The wisdom of life has placed you where you can learn efficiently and serve better.

When someone condemns the world, it is because he feels condemned within himself.

The work you perform is your certificate of identity from the spiritual point of view.

Do—and you will surely receive what you expect to be done.

What you accomplish for others is precisely what you accomplish for yourself.

The laws of the world do not err: What you give of yourself will be given to you.

Earth is our beneficent school—remember that the clock does not stop.

IN THE DOMAIN OF WORDS

Speak, and you will be known.

You refer to others according to what exists within yourself.

The word is always the safest channel through which you reveal yourself.

A phrase of hope is a burst of light.

What you notice as good or evil in someone's life is a complement of your own self.

Comments about others are, in truth, disclosures of what you carry within.

Almost imperceptibly, we speak only of what we have already managed to learn.

What we see on others' roads is what lies upon our own path.

Whoever speaks without placing the heart in what is said does not reach the heart he wishes to touch.

When you wish to be seen, do not use complaint for such display; work in silence and you will be seen more securely.

The cruelest word is the one used to destroy good.

Do not dwell on misfortune, for the happiness of the one who suffers may arrive tomorrow.

If speech is not illumined by understanding and love, conversation will always be useless.

Whoever proposes to enlighten does not mention ingredients of darkness.

You will never regret having spoken a good word.

Teach nothing by highlighting evil for the mere pleasure of emphasizing it, for your listeners will be hypnotized by images you would not wish to impress upon them.

Whoever forgives should not refer to the debt that has been settled, lest a new wound be opened in the heart of the one who was indebted.

A careful diet in conversation is health for the spirit.

An indulgent word is a vaccine against many evils.

In discussion you may clarify, but in service you convince.

MEDIUMS ON EARTH

An ever-new theme in the Spiritist Doctrine: mediums.

They may be compared to trees, in the judicious definition of Allan Kardec. Yet, to preserve useful trees, it is imperative that we provide them with necessary irrigation and proper protection, so that wanderers along the road may not strike them to seize their fruits.

Let us turn to other symbols.

Let us imagine them as violins through which friends dwelling in the Beyond perform the melody of messages that are their own; yet it naturally becomes our duty to collaborate in keeping their strings harmoniously tuned.

They are bridges connecting two lives; however, such bridges will not support essential passage if we remove their points of support.

In them we have help like springs of water from which we drink refreshment and encouragement; yet we must not stir their muddy depths if we wish to draw clear water.

Among humankind there are no mediums who are not human.

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For this very reason, before the person of goodwill who performs, on our behalf, the task of intermediary of souls, we must see a being as human as ourselves—spirits still bound to Earth, far from the condition of angels.

We favor constructive criticism in any mediumistic task and do not cultivate paternalism or improper indulgence toward the instruments of mediumship within our circle, recognizing that no good is achieved without disciplined work.

Nevertheless, we cannot forget that many companions withdraw from mediumistic duties because they cannot endure the hammer of insult, the chill of disregard and abandonment, the withdrawal of fair means for the exercise of the functions to which they were called, and the enormous struggles arising from snares of shadow from which many fail to escape, hypnotized by the agents of obsession.

If you have a medium of goodwill within your own relationships, assist him or her with kindness and understanding, steadiness and respect.

If the intermediary falls into imbalance, use charity to help restore him. If he continues upon the right path, support him likewise so that he may not falter.

Before God's laws, any medium in the world, no matter how much they operate and cooperate with Higher Spirituality in spreading truth and light, is always a human being and, most of the time, a fragile being, as is the case with many of us.

LUMINOUS BLESSING

On the Physical Plane, we symbolize the presence of a great University. From Spiritual Life — true Life — come the students, or more precisely speaking, the souls who are born into human homes. Yet before embodiment in the earthly cradle, many of those who already enjoy the faculty of choosing their curriculum of specific lessons enroll themselves in the institutes of reincarnation, pursuing achievements they believe necessary for their own refinement.

The subjects offered are most diverse.

There are those who insist on being reborn in conditions of extreme poverty, so that the sharp spur of necessity may help them discover the joy of work.

Others request bodily deformities, seeking to install the light of humility within themselves.

Some ask for congenital and irreversible illnesses, aiming at the correction of unhappy habits in which they strayed in other stretches of time. There appear those who plead for heavy trials, hoping to accumulate strength of spirit. Here and there are those who request limitations in the field of affection, intending to sublimate their own feelings.

And many implore a return to the presence of former adversaries, binding themselves to them in the ties of consanguinity, striving to learn forgiveness and tolerance within the sanctuary of the home.

Once these concessions are granted, the necessary provisions begin to be arranged for the benefit of the candidates. Yet many apprentices retreat before obstacles, entering conflicts of conscience.

Deep within, they know themselves hungry for spiritual values such as patience and humility, courage and firmness of character, the spirit of renunciation and understanding; but instinctively they resume the negative states in which they entangled themselves in many past existences, thus becoming even more indebted before the accounting of life.

If you find yourself on Earth in such a process of improvement and redemption, calm your heart by reflecting upon the eternity of life, and ask God in prayer for strength so that you may not depart from the right path.

Far from passing trophies that may deceive you amid the outward glitter of human existence, you will recognize, in the depths of your own being, that you are gradually conquering imperishable treasures of peace and joy — working and serving always under the luminous blessing of acceptance.

IN HOURS OF CRISIS

Calm your restless heart and move forward.

If you make mistakes, there are ways of correction.

If others are mistaken, someday they will return to the truth.

If certain companions could not understand you, life — in the name of God — will bring others who will.

Bless those who left you along the way, for not everyone can carry out many tasks at once.

Be grateful to those who support you and help those who have fewer resources than you.

Work for the good, wherever you are and however you may be.

Do not wait to sanctify yourself before serving, for we are still human creatures, with defects inherent to our condition — and for that very reason, God does not entrust us only with tasks understandable in the climate of angels.

Do not believe that you can evolve without problems or perfect yourself without sacrifice.

Never lose faith in your power to progress and improve through your own effort.

Rejoice constantly.

Understand that discouragement helps no one.

If someone has offended you, forget it.

Reflect on how many times we may have hurt someone unintentionally and cover evil with good.

If you hear unfortunate remarks about someone, meditate on the good deeds that person may have practiced — or on the good they wished to do but could not accomplish.

In any difficulty, consult hope, for God is transforming everything for the better.

Persevere in the work life has given you to perform.

Think good and speak good.

Bless always.

And if a trial embraces you so forcefully that you cannot restrain your tears, even while weeping, trust in God, certain that tomorrow He will grant you another day.

TIME OF CRISIS

In times of crisis — serenity is imperative. Especially in times of emotional crisis, when we so often oppose one another.

Spiritual renewal, in essence, is not a work plan executed from one existence to another.

From cradle to earthly cradle, we are entrusted with building the love that will one day unite us forever.

Rarely, however, do we earn distinction in the tasks performed.

The conquest of sublimation demands varied subjects of personal mastery.

In each existence, the spirit may gain in diligence but lose in detachment; may be rewarded in self-denial yet become entangled in possessive affection.

Progress unfolds slowly until the seasons of examination arrive, proving the spirit's acquisitions.

Reflect upon these so-called new times in which you find yourself, before the astonishing spectacle of violent separations.

If you intend to overcome the lessons life presents, let understanding support your reasoning — and love always.

Habits change; feelings transform.

If loved ones adhere to new ideas that lead to negative changes, have compassion for them and assist them as much as you can.

One may have embraced a supposed independence — freedom without responsibility — and wandered into

experiences that will later return to him as stern but necessary lessons.

Another dressed the mind in bright illusions, distanced himself from faith, and turned away from any remembrance of God.

And yet another accepted the subtle invitations of escape through toxic substances —misusing elements that Divine Goodness entrusted to human science for the relief of the suffering — and thus extended his fall into physical and spiritual hardship.

Arm yourself with patience and forgive your companions in earthly labor as many times as necessary.

Whether they are called, in physical form, parents or children, husbands or wives, brothers and friends, relatives or companions, remember that we all stand before imperishable life.

He who possesses balance, help the disoriented.

He who reasons securely, support the one who strayed from good sense.

Let those who have light illuminate the path for those who lie in darkness.

And let those who stand, help the fallen, because times of crisis are times of testing, and only those who seek to forget themselves to understand and help are honored with the desired distinction, since we are all eternal spirits, and both the laws of love and the laws of pain never change before God.

THE SUPREME TREASURE

Perhaps you have reached the crisis of great losses that mark our lives in the world as unforgettable moments of pain.

You assumed commitments whose fulfillment beloved companions abandoned...

You embraced shared duties with someone who left you alone...

You undertook enterprises of elevation and progress and found yourself stripped of resources at the very moment you most needed protection...

You designed your best plans in the cause of good, and when their realization was well advanced, you felt inwardly confused, under the fleeting impression that evil triumphed...

You nourished lofty projects for the future of loved ones who chose paths clearly contrary to your expectations...

You may have experienced the loss of beloved ones whom physical death removed from your companionship, imposing upon you the bitterness of solitude...

In such hours of uncertainty and tears — when all that seemed best appears lost; when the waves of suffering have shaken the boat of your existence through storms of anguish; when longing wraps you in clouds of sadness; or when misunderstanding marginalizes you in trials hard to bear — do not surrender to discouragement, nor take refuge in despair.

In any circumstances, in which you find yourself alone at heart, or impoverished of strength, contemplate the immensity of the heavens, lift your head, dry your tears and walk forward.

Keep good spirits and hope, because even when you suppose you have lost everything you possessed of value on Earth, you carry with you the greatest treasure of life, which no event in the world can take from you:

You have God.